

THE SENATE OF CANADA

STANDING COMMITTEE
ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS



LE SÉNAT DU CANADA

COMITÉ PERMANENT DES
AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES

March 27, 2003

Representative George R. Nethercutt Jr.
Co-Chairman, Northern Border Caucus
United States House of Representatives
2443 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4705

By fax: (202) 225-3392

Mr. Co-Chairman:

The Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, which it has been my honour to chair since 1999, is currently examining the trade relationship between Canada, the United States and Mexico. My Committee will be visiting Washington during the week of April 28, 2003 in this regard, and is quite eager to meet with you and your Committee.

As you know, Canada and the United States enjoy a unique economic partnership, sharing the world's largest trading relationship. Each is the other's largest trading partner, with over US\$1.2 billion in trade now crossing the Canada-U.S. border every single day, of which American exports represent US\$165 billion or 23% of the U.S. international market. We are anxious to preserve this mutually beneficial flow of goods and services.

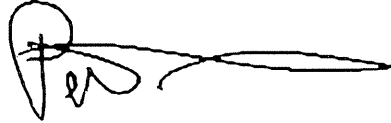
In addition, Canada is the United States' largest supplier of energy, exporting to it more crude and refined oil products than does Saudi Arabia. In terms of national security, these exports contribute significantly to U.S. national energy security. One cannot overstate the importance of having one's largest source of imported energy derived from a reliable source next door.

Naturally, our two countries have very different economic policies, and we do not always react in the same way to the challenges that we face. When we have not managed to resolve our differences through consultation, we have turned to the dispute resolution mechanisms of the WTO and NAFTA. Canada believes very strongly in a rules-based trading system incorporating clear procedures for solving disputes. We seek means whereby these trade rules and dispute settlement systems can be improved.

My Committee would be very pleased to meet the members of your Committee in order to discuss, from Parliamentarians to Parliamentarians, our bilateral trade relationship. I am hopeful that you will accept our invitation to join us in a discussion of these important matters at an informal breakfast (location and time to be determined)

I look forward to your acceptance and remain

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter', followed by a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line that extends to the right.

Peter A. Stollery
Chair
Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs